MARVEL 007

TAYLOR
WATANABE
GURU-eFX

SUPERIOR IRON MAN®

SUPERIOR IRON MAN®

HOWARD FALLING

She Smash

RATED **T+**
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DIRECT EDITION
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007 VARIANT EDITION

MARVEL

WHAT the DUCK?!

BE BEAUTIFUL • BE INTELLIGENT • BE HEALTHY • BE IMMORTAL

BE SUPERIOR

Tony Stark is a technological visionary...a famous, wealthy and unparalleled inventor. With the world's most advanced and powerful suit of armor, Stark has valiantly protected the innocent as the golden Avenger known as IRON MAN.

A recent battle with a mentally powered villain has altered Stark's mind. With a more arrogant and aggressive personality surfacing, Stark used San Francisco to beta test his newest invention...THE EXTREMIS 3.0 App. It can improve people's lives, making them more attractive, smarter and healthier...for a cost.

To further his own questionable agenda, Tony blackmailed the U.S. government into paying him not to sell the plans to a global doomsday device. The reason? So he could use the money to buy his very own media company to further his reach and influence. Unfortunately for him, Pepper Potts bought the company out from under him and then lured him to Resilient's corporate headquarters so that a virtual version of Tony Stark could put this "new" Tony down, once and for all.

CHAPTER 7: STARK CONTRAST

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Iron Man created by Stan Lee, Don Heck, Larry Lieber and Jack Kirby

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SO... YOU'RE ME?
DEEP BELOW RESILIENT'S MANHATTAN HQ.

YES.

AND I AM SO VERY DISAPPOINTED IN YOU, TONY.

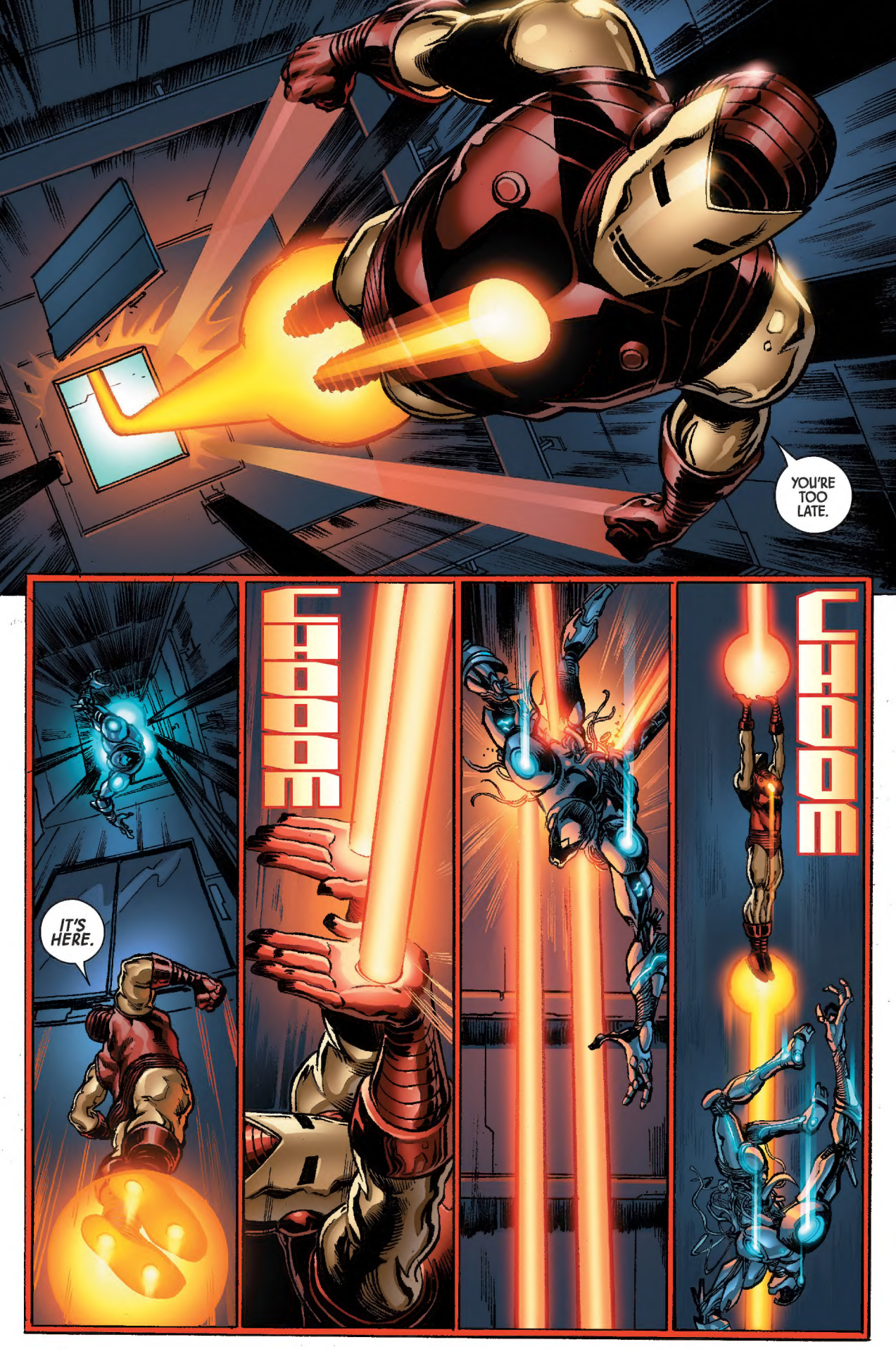
WELL, YOU'RE NOT THE FIRST ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE I'VE DISAPPOINTED, AND I DOUBT YOU'LL BE THE LAST.
LET ME GUESS, AFTER ALMOST LOSING MY MIND TO THE BLACK LAMA, I PUT A CONTINGENCY IN PLACE? YOU'RE ME FROM EIGHT YEARS AGO?
YES.
A FULL BACKUP OF MY MIND IN CASE ANYTHING EVER WENT WRONG AGAIN.
I ASKED PEPPER, AND PROBABLY HAPPY, TO KEEP IT A SECRET FROM ME, THEN I ERASED THE KNOWLEDGE FROM MY OWN MIND?
A SHORT-TERM MIND-WIPE. THEN TWO BOTTLES OF TEQUILA AND A TRULY PUNISHING HANGOVER TO THROW YOU OFF THE SCENT.
YOU'VE BEEN BUSY.
WHAT ARE YOU MAKING HERE?
TNK
SO, WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
NOW, I GO INTO YOUR HEAD AND TRY TO UNDO WHATEVER'S BEEN DONE TO YOU.
I GET YOU BACK.
AND IF YOU CAN'T?
THEN I DO WHAT YOU PLANNED.
I REPLACE YOU.

JUST LIKE THAT? EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN FOR THE LAST EIGHT YEARS, CAST ASIDE?
LOOKING INTO ALL THE QUESTIONABLE THINGS YOU'VE DONE IN THAT TIME, I DON'T THINK ANYONE WILL MISS THE TONY STARK OF THE LAST EIGHT YEARS.
LET'S EASE UP ON THE JUDGMENT. YOU WOULD HAVE DONE THE SAME THINGS IF YOU WERE IN MY POSITION.
YOU WERE. YOU DID.
WELL, I'LL LEARN FROM YOUR MASSIVE CATALOGUE OF FAILURES. I'LL BE BETTER.
TOOM
NO. YOU WON'T.
CAN YOU HEAR THAT?
TOOM
THAT'S THE SOUND OF AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD PLAN BEING RENDERED OBSOLETE BY YEARS OF ADVANCEMENT.
TOOM
THAT'S THE SOUND OF YOUR EXTINCTION.

"MY ARMOR IS COMING."
TOOM
IT WILL COME FOR ME, WHATEVER YOU DO.
YEAH.
PEPPER AND I HAVE A THEORY ON THAT.

WHAT IN THE HELL ARE YOU--?
THNK
UNH!
THNK
HNNG!
TNK
THNK
THD

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
FSSHHHHH
WE'RE GOING FOR A LITTLE TRIP.


YOU'RE TOO LATE.
IT'S HERE.
CHOOM
CHOOM
CHOOM

KRAKOOOM
LIENT
KRAKOOOM

FWOOOOM

YOU CAN'T OUTRUN IT.
I DON'T WANT TO.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
THE MARK II WASN'T BUILT TO FLY IN SPACE!
NO. IT WASN'T.

I'VE MADE SOME UPGRADES.

NOW. MY THEORY IS THAT THERE'S A SMALL AMOUNT OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN YOUR NEW ARMOR, BUT NOT TOO MUCH INTELLIGENCE.
JUST A LINK.
ENOUGH THAT IT WILL ALWAYS KEEP COMING.
IT WILL ALWAYS FOLLOW YOU.
EVEN TO PLACES IT'S NOT BUILT TO GO.
LIKE SOMEWHERE WITHOUT OXYGEN, WHERE ITS JETS CAN'T FIRE.
"DON'T STRUGGLE. YOU'RE HELPLESS."

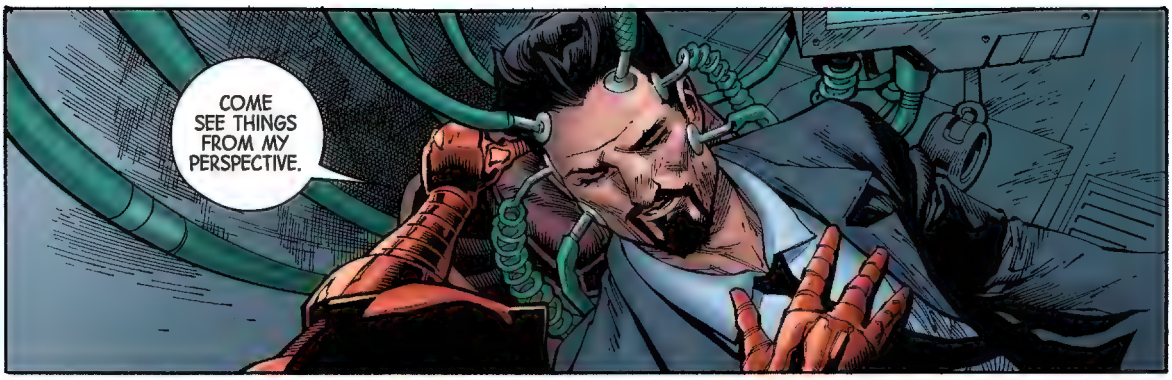
RAAARGH!
TRY TO CALM DOWN, JAMIE. YOU'RE IN A CONTAINMENT FIELD. THERE'S NOTHING TO HIT. THERE'S NOTHING TO FIGHT AGAINST.
I WANT TO LET YOU GO. I DO.
BUT FIRST I NEED YOU TO PROMISE YOU WON'T GO ON A BUILDING-DESTROYING RAMPAGE.
I KNOW YOU'RE ANGRY. I KNOW YOU'RE SCARED. BUT I JUST WANT TO TALK.
CAN WE DO THAT?
...OKAY.

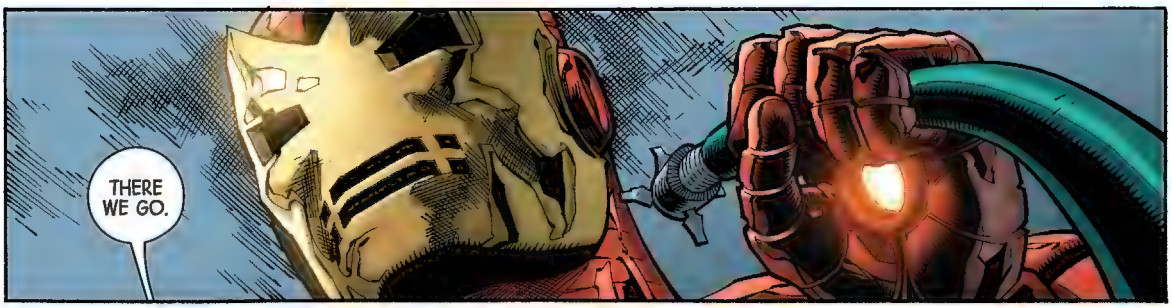
TONY SENT ME THE INFORMATION.
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED.
AND I'M SORRY.
I KNOW TONY IS CHARMING AND YOU'RE PROBABLY LOYAL TO HIM. BUT THAT MAN IS NOT TONY STARK.
I KNOW HIM, PROBABLY BETTER THAN ANYONE. AND HE'S CHANGED. CORRUPTED.
I WANT THE MAN I KNOW BACK. BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY I WOULD NEVER HURT TONY. I ONLY WANT TO SAVE HIM.
WHERE IS HE?
HE'S...
HE'S... WELL--

"--HE'S SOMEWHERE HE CAN'T HURT ANYONE."

PEPPER.
YOU JUST WANTING TO WATCH?
THERE'S INFORMATION I NEED FROM YOU BEFORE WE CAN BEGIN.
WELL, YOU KNOW I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SO COMPLIANT WHEN KIDNAPPED.
WHERE DID YOU GET THE MONEY?
OH, THAT.
I SOLD ONE OF THE DANGEROUS ONES.
WHICH ONE DID YOU SELL?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
PEPPER. WHATEVER YOU THINK OF ME, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THE ATROCITY I SOLD CAME RIGHT FROM THE MIND INSIDE THE MACHINE STANDING HERE.
YOU SHOULD ALSO KNOW THAT "ME" FROM EIGHT YEARS AGO IS PROBABLY HAVING SOME PRETTY CONFUSING THOUGHTS ABOUT YOU INSIDE HIS ROBOT HEAD HERE.
REPLACING ME DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN YOU GET A BETTER MODEL. YOU THINK YOU CAN TRUST THIS TONY?
YOU HONESTLY THINK HE DOESN'T HAVE THE SAME PERVERSE THOUGHTS THAT--?
ZZZT
TONY?!

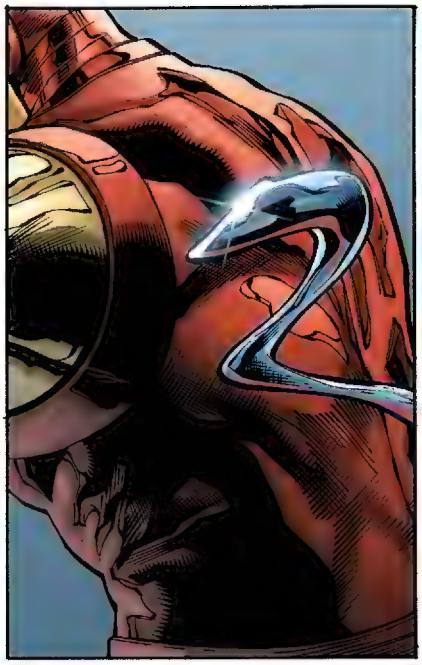
PEPPER DOESN'T NEED TO HEAR THIS.
WHO DID YOU SELL IT TO?
NO. I'M PRETTY SURE I NEED TO HOLD ONTO THAT INFORMATION.
IT'S THE ONLY REASON I'M STILL HERE.
ISN'T IT?
I'M TRYING TO WORK OUT, IF I WAS YOU, WOULD I SEE ANYTHING IN ME WORTH SAVING?
OR WOULD I BE TOO CONCERNED ABOUT MY OWN EXISTENCE TO CARE?
YEAH. THAT'S WHAT I FIGURED.
IF YOU'VE DECIDED TO REPLACE ME AND HIDE IT FROM PEPPER, LET'S AT LEAST TALK A BIT FIRST.
YOU SHOULD KNOW MY VISION BEFORE YOU DECIDE TO DESTROY IT.
YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO ENTER MY MIND. DO IT.


COME SEE THINGS FROM MY PERSPECTIVE.

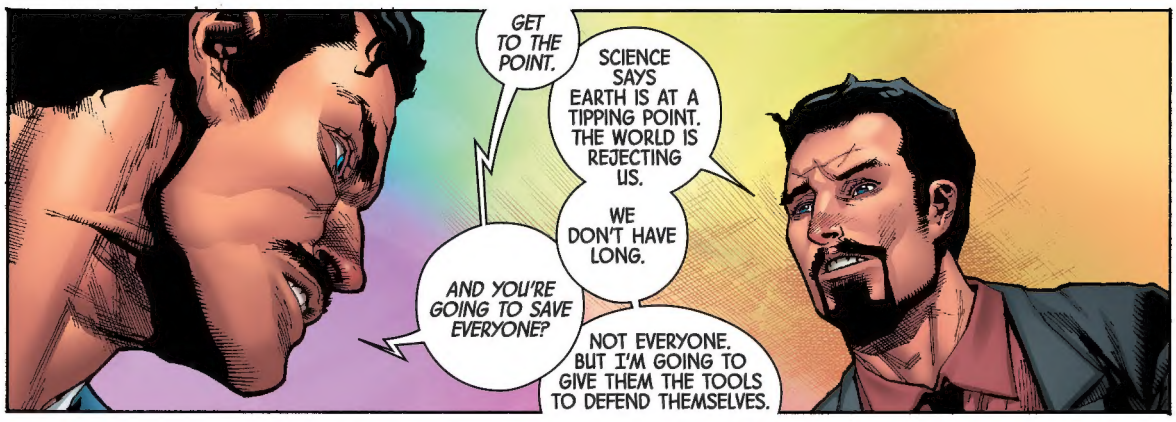

THERE WE GO.

BE READY.

"I'M EXPECTING THIS TO GET A BIT WEIRD."



WELCOME TO MY MIND. LIKE WHAT I'VE DONE WITH THE PLACE?
HEH.
I LIKE THAT YOU STILL THINK OF YOURSELF WITH JUST A MUSTACHE.

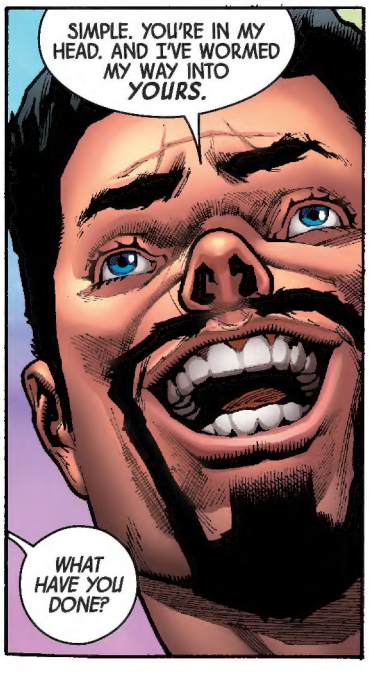

GET TO THE POINT.
SCIENCE SAYS EARTH IS AT A TIPPING POINT. THE WORLD IS REJECTING US.
WE DON'T HAVE LONG.
AND YOU'RE GOING TO SAVE EVERYONE?
NOT EVERYONE. BUT I'M GOING TO GIVE THEM THE TOOLS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES.

BUT THERE'S NO WAY TO DO THIS COMPLETELY SMOOTHLY. I WILL NEED THE WORLD'S MEDIA TO BELIEVE IN THE CAUSE, AND SPREAD THE MESSAGE I CONTROL.
OPPOSITION WILL HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH AND SOME WILL BE LEFT BEHIND. BUT WE'RE VASTLY OVERPOPULATED ANYWAY.

SO, YOUR PLANS TO SAVE THE WORLD INCLUDE A MASSIVE GLOBAL DEATH TOLL?
A STATISTICALLY SMALL NUMBER WILL BE SACRIFICED SO THAT THE REST OF US HAVE A QUALITY OF LIFE THAT--

AND WHO CHOOSES THESE STATISTICAL SACRIFICES?
TONY STARK DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE WHO LIVES AND WHO...

YOUR MIND. IT'S SOMEWHERE ELSE AS WELL...?
IT'S...
WHAT'S HAPPENING?


SIMPLE. YOU'RE IN MY HEAD. AND I'VE WORMED MY WAY INTO YOURS.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

FZZT
THNK
WHAT HAVE I DONE?
TNK
I'VE CHOSEN WHO LIVES AND WHO DIES.
NOW...
...I THINK IT'S TIME PEPPER AND I HAD A TALK.
TO BE CONTINUED...

SUPERIOR CLASS MAIL

SEND YOUR E-MAILS TO MONDOMARVEL@MARVEL.COM (Please mark them "OK to print")

Welcome back to SUPERIOR CLASS MAIL, Superior Shellhead fans! Getting lots of e-mails and I thought it would be fun to have writer extraordinaire Tom Taylor answer your letters. – Mark Paniccia

Having just recently fallen back into the habit of comic reading, I couldn't have started over with anything better than SUPERIOR IRON MAN. I've always been partial to characters that I can relate to in one way or another and I know for sure that if I were in Tony's shoes, I wouldn't always have the strongest set of morals. Keep up the awesome work on a great idea!

Derek Armstrong

Thanks, Derek! First up, welcome back to comics, the greatest storytelling medium on the planet! From the sound of it, you're saying you agree with Superior Tony's actions, and you'd do the same immoral things in his liquid-metal-and-symbiote shoes? That's…troubling. But we're glad you're enjoying the ride, Superior Derek :)

Dear Tom Taylor and Mark Paniccia,

I have been a dedicated Iron Man fan for as long as I can remember, I've read and collected a whole pantheon of Stark adventures from David Michelinie and Bob Layton's stellar "Demon in a Bottle" to Matt Fraction's iconic run on Shellhead and I can tell you that I find this new series an absolute TRIUMPH! The one thing I miss in all Tony Stark stories from the past few years is what I like to call the "Robert Downey Jr. element." That rush of excitement you feel when Stark suits up, the thrill of his Playboy presence and above all, his outright swagger! You have brought that element back to the character and I praise and applaud you for that! I have finally found the same thrill and excitement from your storytelling as I got from the first movie! Thank you so much for this memorable series! I've just finished issue #5 and I need more! I am absolutely LOVING the badass element you've given the character, it fits him like a supercharged repulsor gauntlet!

The recurring theme that I get whilst reading this series is that of my favorite show (and frankly greatest television masterpiece of all-time) BREAKING BAD. Not in the way that makes me think that whenever Tony's developing upgrades for his Extremis 3.0 he's doing it in tighty-whities or that Teen Abomination should start wearing super-sized hoodies and a beanie. But in the way that - like the show - it excites and invigorates me to see the "golden boy" (or Avenger) be BAD! Every time he reaches for that bottle or beats the SNOT outta Daredevil I get a buzz that we're gonna get the most badass Superior-Heisenberg moment of all-time!

I am absolutely loving the seamless series! PLEASE continue for as long as possible because we're all LOVING this new Tony! Thank you also for re-igniting my love for comics!

Jake Eadie , 18
Australia

Damn, Jake. Mentioning some of my personal favorite runs. High praise indeed. Nice to see someone else writing from Australia too! The "swagger" was definitely the first thing we wanted to get right, and Robert Downey Jr.'s portrayal is a great place to go to find it. That swagger is something that Yildiray, Felipe and Laura have absolutely captured with raised eyebrows, condescending looks, and maddening grins all the way through. It was important for Tony to still be Tony even when his actions were completely against his previous beliefs. It's the fact that the character is still recognizable, even if he's gone bad, that some people love about the book, and some people, well, let's look at the next letter…

I have a few things to say about the Villainous Iron Man. I think it is laughable that Taylor says he is not a villain. Tony Stark is nothing but a low-down dirty drug dealer.

•He has infected the water supply of a major city with a virus.

•He has assaulted and kidnapped Matt Murdock, and then to top things off, he has screwed with his mind. He has at the very least erased parts of Matt's memory. Who knows what else he has done to Matt's mind and/or body?

•Tony threatened to drop a man to his death (and I do not doubt that he would have killed him) because this grieving father has the audacity to make Tony look bad in front of his drug addled public. I really think that there is no low that the Villainous Iron Man won't stoop to.

(I was wondering why the Avengers have not stepped in to stop him and then I realized that they are not that heroic right now either.)

I have been reading comics since the early sixties. I've read and collected every Iron Man comic since his debut in TALES OF SUSPENSE. I have stayed by Tony's side as he went through "Demon in a Bottle." I suffered through "Teen Tony." I've been there for the good and bad times. Right now the only reason I am reading this travesty is that I want to be there when Tony gets what is coming to him. And I want him to suffer as much as he has made those around him suffer, including me.

Thanks for listening,
Tom Reed

Hi Tom!

Yes. This is one of the bad times for Tony. Yes, he's a villain now (I think I said otherwise early-on before he was too bad). We want to press buttons and create a hero you want to punch in the face. Some people love to hate this Iron Man. Some people just outright hate this Iron Man. We're deliberately doing things we know will annoy some people and go against the character, but that's because that's what this book is supposed to be. It's exactly what Yildiray and I were asked to put forward – a perversion of the hero.

But, don't worry, not many changes in comics are permanent, and I'm sure the hero that you (and I) love will be back eventually. And it should be clear that this book doesn't just contain one Tony now. The good Tony is here too.

Thanks for reading! Hope Superior Tony gets his comeuppance soon!

I just want to thank you for such a Superior comic. This is by far the best comic Marvel has put out in a long while. The art is realistic yet doesn't lose that great comic book style expression on each of the character's faces that I so love. The writing makes you feel like you know the real Tony Stark and I have to say, I absolutely love...to hate him! My only concern with the comic is with issue #5. As a human, Teen Abomination is wearing silver earrings. In the rest of the comic, he's wearing gold, so I assume he changed his earrings, but then in the panel to the right of the HOWARD THE DUCK ad, he's still talking to Tony in the present and he's wearing silver earrings. When I noticed that, my face matched Tony's on the bottom right of the page. So are those mood earrings that change color with Teen Abomination's emotions? How do you explain that, Marvel?

Philip J. Hanan

Um…when Jamie was transformed into Teen Abomination, an incredible gamma-related chain-reaction turned his earrings from gold to…yeah, I got nothing. Mark Paniccia? This will be explained in SECRET WARS right? That's one of the secrets? Glad you're liking the book, Philip! We'll get that jewelry looked at.

I have been really enjoying SUPERIOR IRON MAN! It is very refreshing to read this story of a familiar but different character. I am enjoying having great conversations about Tony's new personality. My only concern is that this is Tony is to be hated but yet I relate to this Superior Tony Stark. Thank you for this great story and artwork!

Cheers,
David

You're not the first person to say you relate to Superior Tony Stark. I'm glad we could write a book for all those out there who secretly aspire to be a controlling, villainous billionaire. Clearly, there was a gap in the market. Thanks for reading, David!

-Tom Taylor